The Sunday School Service.

BY DAVID BAILEY.

Nov. 2nd 1884.

The Temple Dedicated.—1 Kings 8 : 22—36.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee.—1 Kings 8 : 27.

[*Open the Bible and read the lesson.*]

INTRODUCTION.

Seven years had elapsed since Solomon commenced building the temple and it was almost completed. The brazen pillars, Jachin and Boaz, were in place; the altar of burnt-offering and the altar of incense were in the new building. The brazen laver with its support of twelve oxen had been constructed under the supervision of Hiram, the Tyrean master workman. And now, as his sacred task was almost done, Solomon calls all the people together to dedicate the building to the Lord. The harvests had been gathered in and the people had no work that was particularly urgent, so they could take time to devote one day to this great pageant, a religious gathering such as Judea had never seen. They brought the tabernacle and the furniture from Gibeon, but the Ark of the Covenant they brought down from its place on Mt. Zion, for it had not been in the old tabernacle of cloth of goat's hair since it was captured by the Philistines in battle. When King David brought the ark to Jerusalem he placed it on Mt. Zion, near the site of the proposed temple.

LESSON.

Verse 22. "Before the altar." The great altar made of brass and used for burnt-offerings. This altar was five cubits or at least seven and one-half feet square and three cubits or four and one-half feet high. 'In the presence of all the congregation." Separated from the Court of the Priests by a railing. The congregation was not permitted to come within the railing unless it was some one who had an offering to make. Solomon had caused a brazen platform to be built near the altar seven or eight feet long, three or four feet wide, and four or five feet high, and on this he "stood" upon his knees before the Lord, and spread out his hands toward heaven.

Verse 23. "There is no God." Meaning that the Lord was the only true God. "Who keepest covenant." This must mean something more than merely keeping his promises. The word "mercy" added seems to indicate that the Lord was more merciful than the people deserved, that is, that he did more than was really required by the covenant.

Verse 24. "Who hast kept." The promise made to David was: "I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.' 2 Sam. 7 : 12, 13.

Verses 25-26. Solomon asks that the Lord will remember that part of the promise which was yet to be fulfilled.

Verse 27. "Will God indeed dwell on the earth." Solomon realized that an omnipresent God, one whom the heaven of heavens could not contain, could not possibly have his sole dwelling-place in the little house built for him on earth. This too, showed to Solomon the superiority of his God over the gods of the heathen who were supposed to have their homes in certain fixed places.

Verse 28. "The prayer of thy servant." By the term 'servant,' Solomon shows his humility.

Verse 29. "That thine eyes may be open." That he might hear every petition that was offered up and judge whether the prayers were sincere or not. "Name." His name and his presence are often used as synonymous terms.

In referring here to Jerusalem as the chosen dwelling-place of the Almighty, Solomon seems to refer to some inferences that may be drawn from certain passages of scripture, for there is no passage that states specially that he shall dwell at Jerusalem.

Verse 30. "Toward this place." The Israelite, no matter where he was, would turn his face toward Jerusalem when he engaged in prayer, for an example notice that Daniel opened the window toward Jerusalem, and prayed there in the sight of the people of Babylon. "Forgive." Hearing here must be taken in the sense of accepting. In this sense God will not hear a request that is not made in the proper spirit.

Verse 31. "If any man trespass." That is by keeping some article that has been found and conceals it from the owner, or some similar trespass. "An oath." It was customary in such cases to release the suspected party on oath.

Verse 32. "Condemning the wicked." God was to decide which one had sworn falsely and punish him as he deserved, and the one who had been wronged should be justified.

Verse 33. "When thy people." In Deut. 28 : 15, &c., it is stated that Israel shall be punished a nation when it sinned as a nation, but they might repent as a nation and plead with God.

Verse 34. In such a case Solomon implores God to be ready to hear and judge. Many times they were carried into captivity on account of their sins, Solomon foreseeing this asks God that he will not leave them in captivity, but bring them back again to the promised land when they had been sufficiently punished

Verse 35. "There is no rain." The giving of rain was like the opening of the windows of heaven. A great drought was looked upon by the Jews as a punishment for the sins of the nation.

Verse 36 "Then hear thou." Solomon again calls upon God to be merciful to his people when they turn to him in penitence. "That thou teach." Rather, that thou wilt teach them. The punishment would be sufficient to teach them the true way. Affliction is God's punishment now as well as then, and until we learn to accept it as sent from God, we cannot expect that "peace that passeth all understanding." Of course it may not come to every one for some may learn without this schooling, but sooner or later almost everyone will be called upon to take a lesson in this school.

From the Millersburgh Church, Iowa.

Inasmuch as there have been no reports given, lately, from this church, and knowing that we have some good news to relate, I take it upon myself to write the following:

On the 10th of September, brother J. H. Swihart came among us, and held a series of meetings at Pleasant Hill school house, three and a half miles from Millersburgh, which ended with a communion on the 20th. Brother Swihart held forth the word with power. We were all made glad and felt that it was good for us to be there.

The meeting was well attended and good interest was manifested. After a few days the prodigals began to return to the fold, and continued coming till nine souls were added to the church. They were all young, six being brethren and three sisters. Two of the sisters were quite young. One of them is our little contributor to the Youths' Department.

On the 21st brother Swihart and a number of us started for the church east of South English and fourteen miles south of this place. The Brethren at that place helped to build the church house, but the German Baptists hold the keys, and, consequently, we were locked out, so brother Swihart had to preach on the steps. Once this was a flourishing church and many came from far and near to drink of the waters of truth, and to make confession to the Lord. It was there that I laid down my trophies at the feet of Jesus. To the best of my knowledge there has been but one addition to the church in two and a half years, and that was an Elder's son.

When I recall the once prosperous condition of this church I mourn its departed glory. Its history is no longer a record of souls coming into the fold; nor of Christian love, and feasts of charity; but is one of expulsion and famine. How long, O Lord! will this famine last? When thou hast shut up the heavens for three and a half years, will not Ahab then give up his Baal—annual meeting?

In the evening we went to the school house a half-mile away, but as the German Baptists held the keys of it also, and we could get the use of the house only one evening. Their plea for not letting us use the house was, that if they permitted the house to be used for any other purpose than that for which it was intended, the land on which it was built would go back to the farm of which it had formerly been a part. However, they were not alarmed about the singing schools that were being held there. After they, with an air of conscientiousness, had given their excuse, we asked to whom the land belonged, and they answered: "Brother Geo. Wine," one of their ministers, who was then talking with us. We smiled, and felt we had found something that was *very meagre*. So we obeyed the injunction of the scripture and shook the dust from our feet and departed.

We then came back into our vicinity, and held a few meetings in Wilcokes' school house, then brother Swihart bade us farewell.

I wish to say, that there is a law in Iowa that grants privilege of holding divine worship in school buildings when not in use for educational purposes.

JOHN A. MEYERS.

Millersburgh, Iowa.

In good fortune be not too elevated and confident. In misfortune be not too despondent.

Notes and Jottings.

Since my last I have attended a communion with the brethren in Fayette county, Ohio; also one in Perry county, Ohio. Of the one in Fayette county we would speak as fraught with much interest to me. This church was formerly the home of brother J. W. Beer, and often whilst he lived and labored with the brethren here I had "*almost*" been permitted to visit and worship with them, but something always seemed to be in the way. Just now, I remember of receiving six postal cards from brother Beer in one week last fall, requesting me to labor for them, put I could not; hence, this was my first visit amongst the brethren in the Fairview church

Missing train connections I did not arrive until 8 o'clock. The brethren were waiting patiently, as well as eight hundred spectators, whose conduct throughout was commendable. We had an enjoyable feast. Formed pleasant acquaintances with brethren here. We preached for them Sunday at 10 30 A. M., had dinner served in the grove near the church for all, after which, at 2 30 P. M., preached again; also, in the evening to large and attentive congregations. The church here is scattered over considerable territory. Many of its membership have moved west in the past year, but I am glad that her membership is alive, and that her mission in this place is being executed by the wide-awake brethren, who have the service of the Master foremost in the work of life. At present they are without a pastor; but arrangements are being made to supply them. Brother J. H. Rittgers of Logan, Ohio will preach for them Nov. 1st. or 2nd.

Brother Hugh McCoy took me, on Monday morning Oct. 6th. to the train, and I returned home via Columbus. I tarried in the Capitol City about four hours, and through the courtesies of Mr. James Claypoole, a prominent business man and friend, I was shown a portion of the Ohio Penitentiary; and also from him gathered many interesting facts relative to crime and its consequences. Some of which, in the near future, I shall give to the readers of the EVANGELIST.

THE PERRY COUNTY OHIO FEAST.

On Thursday evening October 16th,, we held our feast with the dear brethren in Perry county Ohio. It was held in the Brethren's new meeting house—Bethel. A large congregation of spectators were present and better attention could not have asked, and better order was never had, even upon a funeral occasion than was had at this communion.

The Brethren here have, by much sacrifice, built a new house, and are now in peace and love with one another. Their future is promising. I preached for them on the following evening. Brethren J. H. Rittgers and J. H. Palmer, ministers from Mt. Zion church, Hocking county Ohio, were with us at this communion. Their communion will be Saturday Octnber 25th.

R. F. MALLOTT.

From Roann, Ind.

According to appointment, we commenced our meeting on Monday evening, September 22nd.

We expected brother Fitzgerald, of South Bend, to be with us on Tuesday evening; but owing to bad health, he did not arrive until Friday night. His presence revived us very much.

On Saturday evening we had communion. Brother Fitzgerald did the officiating. He remained with us until Wednesday, and preached the word with power.

The immediate result of our meetings was six additions: five from the German Baptist church, and one by baptism. We had a good interest worked up and, if our brother could have remained longer, no doubt, more would have united with us.

On Wednesday evening we led one penitent soul down into the sparkling waters and there administered the ordinance of baptism; after which we repaired to the church and attended to the laying on of hands according to the apostolic manner. She and those who came from the German Baptist church, were received by giving them the right hand of fellowship and the kiss of charity. I think this looks more like love and union than to simply say, "We receive you."

We had a good meeting and feel much encouraged and say to brother Fitzgerald, come again.

WM. M. SUMMERS.

Roann, Ind.

Elder Wolf's California Items.

It has been some time since I have sent anything for your columns; but since brother J. W. Beer has been among us, he has kept you pretty well supplied with items of interest from this part of California.

Our brother, J. W. Beer, is busy preaching the word, and the longer he preaches at a place, the more interesting are his sermons. The longer we are acquainted with him, the more we love and appreciate his labors; but California is no easy place to build up, and keep a large church together any length of time. It is to be hoped, however, that things will change in this respect, by and by.

Our protracted efforts in Lathrop have just closed. We had a good meeting—said to be such by those interested. Those who attended the meetings regularly, were much pleased edified and built up spiritually. Elder Beer conducted the meetings.

May the Lord's blessing attend the labors of all his servants, so that a great harvest may soon be gathered.

GEO. WOLFE.

Lathrop, Cal.,

Cause and Effect.

DEAR EVANGELIST: While musing on the past, the language of a good old brother comes to my mind; he said: "There is some cause for the severing of our fraternity." Yes; some cause produced this effect. Now, if we will prayerfully think over the past, we can see what this cause has been. As we see there has been strife and contention, let each one that has been trying to throw the blame on others, take his full share on himself, and all pray to have the mind of a faithful Abraham, who said, on a similar occasion, "Let there be no strife between us," and as we know how "sweet it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," Let us all be willing to hold up the olive-branch of peace, and do what we can to the honor of God, and the progress of his cause; and good result will be sure to follow. Yours in hope of a blissful future.

R. K. BINKLEY.

Huntington, Ind.

A Mother's Tact.

The mother was sewing busily, and Josie was sitting on the carpet beside her, and provided with dull, rounded scissors, and some old magazines, was just as busily cutting out pictures.

"It would litter the carpet,"—so said Aunt Martha, who had come in for a cosy chat. Mamma knew this, but she knew that a few minutes work would make all right again, and Josie was happy.

All went well until the little boy found that he had cut off the leg of a horse that he considered a marvel of beauty. It was a real disappointment and grief to the little one.

"Mamma, see!" and half crying he held it up.

"Play he is holding up one foot," the mother said quickly.

"Do real horses, mamma?"

"O, yes, sometimes."

"I will;" and sunshine chased away the cloud that in another minute would have rained down.

It was a little thing, the mother's answer; but the quick sympathy, the ready tact, made all right. The boy's heart was comforted, and he went on with no jar on nerves or temper, and auntie's call lost none of its pleasantness.

"I am tired cutting pictures, mamma," said Josie after a while.

"Well, get your horse wagon, and play those bits of paper are wood, and you are going to bring me a load. Draw it over to that corner by the fire, and put them into the kindling box; play that's the wood-house."

Pleased and proud, the little teamster drew load after load till the papers were all picked up, without h s ever thinking that he was doing anything but play.

"Well, I declare," said Aunt Martha, "old as I am, I've learned one thing to-day, and I wish Emily would come in and take lessons, I do."

Mrs. Waldo looked up in some surprise.

"What do you mean, auntie?"

"Well, I spent yesterday afternoon over there," the old lady had a weakness for visiting, and was "auntie" to people generally, "and things were in a snarl, and a high-delow all the time, starting with less than Josie's given you a dozen times since I sat here. I've had a good talk with you, and you've given me pleasant thoughts for a week to come; over there we couldn't hear ourselves speak. It was, 'Don't do that,' and 'You naughty child,' spill and scratch and break and tumble, scold and slap half the time. Emily means well; she loves her children, and never spares herself sewing for them, or nursing them when they are sick. She has a world of patience some ways, but she don't seem to have any faculty for managing them. Well, well, I'll send her over here, only I won't let on why," and the old lady rolled up her knitting as the bell rang for tea.

A little tact springing from thoughtful love, how good it is!